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SUBJECT: READY TO SERVE: KABUL FEMALE POLICE GRADS,
TRIUMPHANT AND PROUD

Introduction

¶1. (SBU) Triumphantly waving their diplomas in the air and yelling out their dedication to service, twenty-two female police recruits graduated from an eight week US-funded police training in Kabul on 2/25. From Kabul, Herat, Takhar, Khost, Bamyian, and Dai Kundi, most of the women had prior police experience but had not previously completed a training program, although several were brand new recruits. This training is the same course male recruits receive as part of the Afghan National Police (ANP) Focused District Development program. Female police recruits are not permitted to train alongside their male colleagues. The objective of this course was to provide the same training opportunities for female officers. The course includes modules on Afghan law, investigative techniques, tactics, physical training, shooting, and emergency and forensic medicine.

¶2. (SBU) During the graduation ceremony, a senior Ministry of Interior official told the graduates that Afghanistan faced three challenges: terrorism, narcotics, and corruption. He said most people were afraid of the first two, but that everyone should be most afraid of corruption because it forms the base from which terrorism and narcotics thrive. "As Muslims, Afghans, and citizens of the world, it is your duty to wage a strong battle against corruption," he urged. The academy's director also commended the graduates' hard work and dedication to country and acknowledged US support of Afghan police training. INL/NAS Director told the graduates they had selected an immensely challenging and important vocation and thanked them for their hard work and service.

Not a Quiet Group

¶3. (SBU) As the graduates received their diplomas, they turned and faced their classmates, raised the paper above their head, and screamed, "I dedicate myself to serving Afghanistan." The boisterous audience cheered on their classmates, triumphant in their achievement. Cameras snapped as students took hundreds of pictures with classmates, family, instructors, and government officials.

Student Reactions

¶4. (SBU) A Kabul graduate enjoyed all aspects of the training and was eager to resume work. The male police officers she worked with for about a year before starting training generally respected her as a colleague. Now that she completed this rigorous training, she expects their respect only to deepen. "In police work there are no men or women, we are police, and we accomplish our mission," she stated proudly.

¶5. (SBU) A student originally from Khost had worked in a Kabul district police station for eight months before starting the training. The tactical classes were her favorite part of the training, including learning to fight.

¶6. (SBU) A Dai Kundi recruit most enjoyed the firearms training and claimed to be sharpshooter. Her parents worried about her working in law enforcement, but they generally supported her efforts. She is proud to bring in a salary and support her family just as her brothers do.

Next Steps

¶7. (SBU) The next women's training starts on 3/12. The graduates from the 2/25 class will return to work in their home police stations, as fully qualified ANP. Completion of the course gives them equal status as, and permits them to compete for promotion with, their male counterparts.

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